

# MEETING SUMMARY

**Client/Project:** South Mountain Corridor Study Citizens Advisory Team

**Date:** August 28, 2003   **Time:** 5:30 p.m.   **Location:** Vee Quiva Casino

## **CAT Members Attending:**

Rock Argabright, Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber  
Kris Black, Ahwatukee Foothills HOA  
Steve Boschen, Valley Forward  
Chad Campbell, Sierra Club  
Ron Chohamin, Lakewood HOA  
Peggy Eastburn, Estrella Village Planning Committee  
Yolanda Elias, District 6 Chair  
Michael Goodman, Phoenix Mtns Preservation Council  
Don Jones, Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce

Ed Miguel, District 4  
Robert Moss, United Arizona Dairymen  
Wayne Nelson, GRIC District 7  
Silverio Ontiveros, Laveen Village Planning Committee  
Jim Stroger, Kyrene de los Logos Elementary School  
Mary Thomas, GRIC Lt. Governor  
Dave Williams, Knight Transportation

## **Guests:**

Jose Solarez, GRIC Economic Development

## **Staff and Consultants Attending:**

Thor Anderson, ADOT  
Amy Edwards, HDR  
John Godec, GRA  
Theresa Gunn, GCI

Bill Hayden, ADOT  
John Roberts, GRIC DOT  
Bill Vachon, FHWA

**Meeting Summary:** Debbie Fink, GCI

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## **Meeting Handouts:**

- Agenda/List of Upcoming Meetings
- Draft Newsletter (*return comments by end of day September 3*)
- Regional Transportation Plan Fact Sheet, Public Input Form, Public Meetings
- Updated Project Schedule

## **Welcome and Introductions:**

John Godec called the meeting to order and asked the new members to introduce themselves.

## **CAT Comments and Questions:**

- **Question:** What is the deadline for completion of the study? **Response:** We will take as much time as needed but would like to complete by 2005.

## **Regional Transportation Plan Update:**

Mike Connors, RTP consultant, presented an overview of the projects included in the draft plan developed by the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC). Highlights of his remarks are listed below.

- The final RTP draft is out for public review and comment.
- The TPC would like to approve the plan by the end of September. Air quality conformity analysis will be completed by November and authorization from the legislature is expected in early January.
- The election to approve an extension of the ½ cent sales tax will be held May 18, 2004.
- The team's goal was to develop a multi-modal plan to meet a variety of transportation needs.
- There is a total of \$15.3 billion in projected revenues available with \$8 billion coming from the proposed sales tax extension.
- How will the money be spent:
  - 59% for Freeways
  - 8% for Streets
  - 17% Bus
  - 14% Rail
  - 2% Other
- Freeway Budget Breakdown
  - 48% to widen existing freeways
  - 44% for new freeways
  - 5% construct new traffic interchanges
  - 3% other projects

#### **CAT Comments and Questions:**

- **Question:** How did you get a cost estimate for South Mountain? **Response:** An average of the cost estimates for the current proposed alternatives.
- Having a line on the map for South Mountain freeway leads to the perception that the decision has been made.
- **Question:** Why isn't more money going to the alternative modes of transportation? **Response:** The draft plan provides a significant increase in transit funding. The TPC feels this is a fairly balanced plan.
- The plan doesn't fund any transit service in Ahwatukee.
- Phoenix doesn't have high-density origins and destinations to support light rail.
- Queen Creek is being ignored—need to have a 303 in the East Valley.
- **Question:** Why is it only ½ cent tax and not ¾ cent or full cent? **Response:** Because the original tax was a ½ cent and the TPC is only requesting an extension.
- **Question:** What is the priority of what gets funded and when? **Response:** The money is divided annually between modes based on a formula.
- **Question:** Will we see a drop off in construction? **Response:** South Mountain and 303 could be built in early phases because of the planning currently underway.
- **Question:** What about Avondale/Tolleson and support for the I-10 reliever? **Response:** On the policy committee the support for the reliever is coming from the west side.
- Southwest area residents have questions about I-10 reliever and don't want a 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue connection to I-10. Doesn't seem that the plan does much for the Southwest Valley.

- **Question:** What impacts will the I-10 reliever have on the South Mountain corridor?  
**Response:** All the projects will have to go through the planning process to determine cumulative impacts
- The plan includes \$5 million to study commuter rail.
- Keep hearing this is all we have for light rail when we are spending \$10 billion on freeways. If the plan were built today that would be great. When it finally gets built, we will still be 20 years behind.
- There are reports in the paper about South Mountain freeway being dropped. **Question:** What is the story and what are the implications to South Mountain? **Response:** The TPC has made only two motions. One was to build the South Mountain Freeway and Loop 303.
- The Phoenix Mayor has been insistent that the freeway be built in the 1988 alignment.

### **Planning and Technical Update:**

Amy Edwards provided an overview of the project status.

- Project Team
  - Kicked off technical studies on the alternatives.
  - Letter going to adjacent property owners requesting access to gather information.
  - Pecos Road is going to be studied as well as the west side alternatives.
- **Question:** Who do you contact for the well head? **Response:** Department of Water Resources.
- **Question:** What was the outcome of the plans to discuss alternatives with GRIC Districts 4, 6, and 7? **Response:** We did meet at the end of June and presented potential GRIC alignments. The group requested that we develop a project video before moving forward.
- The team is currently looking at a 1,000-foot corridor in case we need to shift alignment to avoid areas with environmental impacts.
- The team will meet with the jurisdictions of Avondale, Tolleson, and Maricopa County to discuss the alternatives.
- Ms. Edwards reviewed three proposed alternatives for the west side.
- **Question:** Will all alternatives work with possible GRIC alternatives? **Response:** There is a common segment between 59<sup>th</sup> and 51<sup>st</sup> for all alternatives.
- **Question:** Tolleson says Phoenix supports the original alignment, is this true? **Response:** The City supports only the western portion of the 1988 alignment.
- A developer is taking deposits for custom homes in the right of way.
- Draft technical reports should be completed by mid-October with final drafts completed by mid-December.
- Draft Methodology Reports were distributed. CAT members were asked to be prepared to discuss at the October meeting which reports they want presented at future meetings.

## **Public Involvement Update:**

Theresa Gunn provided an overview of the upcoming meetings and John Godec reviewed a draft presentation to be presented at the public meetings.

- Ahwatukee has more Pecos Road questions.
- Need to understand that there is a process for dealing with GRIC so they can understand.
- Update population charts.
- Include RTP Plan information.
- Add who makes the final decision.
- CAT members are invited to attend the public meetings.

### **CAT Comments and Questions:**

- **Question:** Why is Pecos still being shown?
- **Question:** How do the delays for GRIC affect the RTP timeline? **Response:** It couldn't be built until EIS is done. Funding would be shifted to other projects.
- **Question:** How successful have you been in getting politicians to attend the public meetings? **Response:** The EIS isn't necessarily a political process. It is a methodical technical based process.

## **GRIC Video and Other Items:**

John Godec stated that we have been asked to prepare a video for GRIC. However, the "Right of Entry" permit to film the video was denied. The project team is requesting a meeting with the Lt. Governor and Governor to discuss the project.

### **CAT Comments and Questions:**

- Need to have an open meeting in Districts 4, 6, and 7.
- The following groups are missing from our meetings: GRIC landowner groups and Tolleson Farms.

## **Next CAT Meeting:**

- The group discussed public attendance at meetings and agreed to open the next meeting to the public.
- The team will prepare a plan on including the public and send it to CAT members for their review and feedback.